IN THE CLAIMS:

1.   (Currently Amended)   A method for searching electronic documents, comprising:

receiving a search expression including one or more search terms each having one or more weighting criteria each comprising a weight criterion and a corresponding user-designated score modifier applicable to the respective weight criterion, wherein the one or more weight criteria criterions each describe a characteristic that the respective search term must satisfy with respect to candidate documents and wherein the corresponding include a user-designated score modifier provides a user-designated weight to the respective weight criterion;

finding one or more candidate documents based on the search expression;

calculating a score for each candidate document according to the one or more weight criteria; and

preparing a list of the one or more candidate documents reflecting the calculated scores.

2.   (Original)   The method of claim 1, further comprising:

sorting the one or more candidate documents according to the calculate scores.

3.   (Original)   The method of claim 1, further comprising:

presenting a subscore for each search term having a weight criterion.

4.   (Currently Amended)   The method of claim 1, wherein the one or more weight criteria criterions are selected from a location of the one or more search terms, a format of the one or more search terms, and a frequency count of the one or more search terms.

5.   (Currently Amended)   The method of claim 1, wherein the one or more weight criteria criterions require that the one or more search terms are located in a section selected from a header section, a caption section, an abstract section, a footnote section, a summary section, and a title section.

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6.   (Currently Amended)   The method of claim 1, wherein the ~~one or more~~ weight ~~criteria~~ criterions require that the one or more search terms have a different format than a common format of a paragraph containing the one or more search terms.

7.   (Original)   The method of claim 6, wherein the format is selected from bold, italic, color, font size and font type.

8.   (Currently Amended)   The method of claim 1, wherein the ~~one or more~~ weight ~~criteria~~ criterions require that a search term be present in the candidate document at least a minimum number of times.

9.   (Currently Amended)   The method of claim 1, further comprising:
        sorting the one or more candidate documents according to the weight criteria.

10.   (Currently Amended)   A signal bearing medium, comprising a program which, when executed by a processor, performs an operation, comprising:
        receiving a search expression including one or more search terms each having one or more weight criteria each comprising a weight criterion and a corresponding user-designated score modifier applicable to the respective weight criterion, wherein the one or more weight ~~criteria~~ criterions each describe a characteristic that the respective search term must satisfy with respect to candidate documents and wherein the corresponding ~~include a~~ user-designated score modifier provides a user-designated weight to the respective weight criterion;
        finding one or more candidate documents based on the search expression;
        calculating a score for each candidate document reflecting the one or more weight criteria; and
        preparing a list of the one or more candidate documents reflecting the calculated scores.

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11.   (Original)   The signal bearing medium of claim 10, wherein the program which, when executed by a processor, further performs the step of sorting the one or more candidate documents according to the calculate scores.

12.   (Original)   The signal bearing medium of claim 10, wherein the program which, when executed by a processor, further performs the step of presenting a subscore for each search term having a weight criterion.

13.   (Currently Amended)   The signal bearing medium of claim 10, wherein the ~~one or more~~ weight ~~criteria~~ criterions are selected from a location of the one or more search terms, a format of the one or more search terms, and a frequency count of the one or more search terms.

14.   (Currently Amended)   The signal bearing medium of claim 10, wherein the ~~one or more~~ weight ~~criteria~~ criterions require that the one or more search terms are located in a section selected from a header section, a caption section, an abstract section, a footnote section, a summary section, and a title section.

15.   (Currently Amended)   The signal bearing medium of claim 10, wherein the ~~one or more~~ weight ~~criteria~~ criterions require that one or more search terms have a different format than a common format of the candidate document.

16.   (Original)   The signal bearing medium of claim 15, wherein the different format is selected from bold, italic, color, font size and font type.

17.   (Currently Amended)   The signal bearing medium of claim 15, wherein the ~~one or more~~ weight ~~criteria~~ criterions require that a search term be present in the candidate document at least a minimum number of times.

18.   (Currently Amended)   A system for searching electronic documents, comprising:

a memory containing a search engine; and

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a processor which, when configured with the search engine, performs an operation, comprising:

receiving a search expression including one or more search terms each having one or more weight criteria each comprising a weight criterion and a corresponding user-designated score modifier applicable to the respective weight criterion, wherein the one or more weight criteria criterions each describe a characteristic that the respective search term must satisfy with respect to candidate documents and wherein the corresponding include a user-designated score modifier provides a user-designated weight to the respective weight criterion;

finding one or more candidate documents based on the search expression;

calculating a score for each candidate document reflecting the one or more weight criteria; and

preparing a list of the one or more candidate documents reflecting the calculated scores.

19.   (Original)   The system of claim 18, wherein the search engine is further configured to perform the step of sorting the one or more candidate documents according to the calculate scores.

20.   (Original)   The system of claim 18, wherein the search engine is further configured to perform the step of presenting a subscore for each search term having a weight criterion.

21.   (Currently Amended)   The system of claim 18, wherein the one or more weight criteria criterions are selected from a location of the one or more search terms, a format of the one or more search terms, and a frequency count of the one or more search terms.

22.   (Currently Amended)   The system of claim 18, wherein the one or more weight criteria criterions require that one or more search terms have a different format than a common format of the candidate document.

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23.   (Original)   The system of claim 22, wherein the different format is selected from bold, italic, color, font size and font type.

24.   (Original)   The system of claim 18, further comprising a database containing one or more candidate documents.

25.   (Original)   The system of claim 18, further comprising a network connection with a client computer from which the search expression is received.

26.   (Currently Amended)   A method for searching electronic documents, comprising:

receiving a search expression including one or more search terms having one or more ~~format~~ weighting criteria each comprising a format criterion and a corresponding user-designated score modifier applicable to the respective format criterion, wherein the format criterions each describe a characteristic that the respective search term must satisfy with respect to candidate documents and wherein the corresponding user-designated score modifier provides a user-designated weight to the respective format criterion;

finding one or more candidate documents based on the search expression;

calculating a score for each candidate document according to the one or more ~~format~~ weighting criteria, ~~wherein the one or more format criteria include a user designated score modifier utilized for score calculation of the one or more candidate documents;~~ and

preparing a list of the one or more candidate documents reflecting the calculated scores.

27.   (Currently Amended)   The method of claim 26, wherein the one or more format ~~criteria~~ criterions require that the respective one or more search terms have a different format than a common format of a paragraph containing the respective one or more search terms.

28.   (Currently Amended)   The method of claim 26, wherein the one or more format ~~criteria~~ <u>criterions</u> are selected from bold, italic, color, font size and font type.

29.   (Canceled)

30.   (Previously Presented)   The method of claim 26, further comprising:
sorting the one or more candidate documents according to the calculate scores.

31.   (Previously Presented)   The method of claim 26, further comprising:
presenting a subscore for each search term having a <u>respective</u> format criterion.

32.   (Currently Amended)   The method of claim 26, wherein the search expression includes one or more search terms having one or more weight ~~criteria~~ <u>criterions</u> selected from<u>:</u>
a location <u>criterion requiring that the respective</u> ~~of the one or more~~ search terms <u>are located in a section selected from a header section, a caption section, an abstract section, a footnote section, a summary section, and a title section;</u> and
a frequency count ~~of the one or more~~ <u>requiring that the respective</u> search terms <u>be present in the candidate document at least a minimum number of times.</u>

33.   (Canceled)

34.   (Canceled)

35.   (Currently Amended)   A method for searching electronic documents, comprising:
receiving a search expression including one or more search terms;
finding a plurality of candidate documents based on the search expression;
calculating a format score for each candidate document, wherein the format scores reflect formatting attributes ~~of~~ <u>applied to</u> the one or more search terms<u>, wherein the formatting attributes comprise a formatting criterion and a corresponding user-designated score modifier applicable to the respective formatting criterion, wherein the</u>

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one or more formatting criterions each describe a formatting characteristic that the respective search term must satisfy with respect to candidate documents and wherein the corresponding user-designated score modifier provides a user-designated weight to the respective formatting criterion; and

sorting the candidate documents to produce a list having a document order at least partially reflecting the calculated format scores.

36. (Original) The method of claim 35, wherein the formatting attributes require that the one or more search terms have a different format than a common format of a paragraph containing the one or more search terms.

37. (Original) The method of claim 35, wherein the formatting attributes are selected from the group consisting of a font type, a font size, a font color, a background color, a bold type style, and an italic type style.

38. (Original) The method of claim 35, wherein the formatting attributes include a location of the one or more search terms within the candidate document.

39. (Original) The method of claim 35, wherein the formatting attributes include whether the one or more search terms are located in a section selected from the group consisting of a header section, a caption section, an abstract section, a footnote section, a summary section, and a title section.

40. (Original) The method of claim 35, wherein the document order at least partially reflects a frequency count of the one or more search terms within the candidate document.

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